

# Gastle, residents demand answers

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The issue surrounds the Georgetown Estates lands located on the Norval hill, bordered by Hall Rd. on the west, Hwy. 7 on the north, Norval to the east and transversed by the west branch of the Credit River and the environmentally sensitive area (ESA), the Hungry Hollow valley lands.

In 1997, owner John Spina was given Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) approval to build an 82-home subdivision (Phase 1) and this year, the OMB approved a 46-home subdivision (Phase 2). In the Phase 1 agreement, Spina agreed to convey more than 30 acres of valley lands to the town—in part to build a trail system, with the understanding that should the need arise, and with proper approvals, public servicing facilities may be built there.

That was a "high risk" clause which staff did not make council aware of, said Gastle. It was believed by her and others on council, she said, that building a sewage pumping station on environmentally sensitive lands could never happen.

But it did.

On August 14, Flume Developments, the subdivision's builder filed a site plan with planning staff for construction of a pump station in valley lands and on August 24 town staff advised site plan committee. In late August/September the Ministry of Transportation gave Flume/Spina, a verbal commitment for an entrance permit off Hwy. 7 into the valley lands as well as permission to locate sewage pipes on its Hwy. 7 right-of-way. In early September, Flume was issued a Halton Region "halt work" order after it was discovered—by a Norval resident—that work was proceeding without proper regional permits. Regional approval was given and on Sept. 16, the Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) gave its okay to build the station. All that remained was for the town's site plan committee to approve a site plan. That was done Sept. 28 and formalized by council on Monday night.

Gastle and the Norval Community Association, unhappy with the process, which they claim began and ended in secrecy, have a list of questions they want answered.

- Why was the location of a pumping station approved in the valley lands—which they say is a CVC identified Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)?

On Tuesday Mary Bracken, a CVC planner, said the area where the station is to be located is not considered an ESA by CVC. She said sometime in the past it had been filled and was already disturbed. According to Councillor Norm Elliott, the town's representative on the CVC, the agency had no basis for objecting to the application.

- Why did the Region of Halton approve sewage capacity for 36 additional units within Norval—without a development application for the 36 units, without a Norval Secondary Plan, and without notification of the public?

Both Gastle and Bryant contend it's because Halton Region staff members were anticipating a future development application by Spina to build on a smaller property within the Norval hamlet, bordering the pumping station location.

"The only reason the sewage pumping station is being located where it is (in the valley) is to serve the future development needs of Mr. Spina in Norval... If it wasn't for that, the pumping station could be built anywhere on the tablelands (within Phase 1 and 2)," said Bryant.

"We're not trying to presuppose what approvals will be given," said David Huk, development coordinator for Halton Region on Tuesday. He said the region realized there was a potential in the future that those lands could be developed and wanted to ensure there was enough flexibility in the pumping station's capacity to accommodate that development.

Pat Murphy, manager of development review for Halton Region, added development can be expected there because it is part of the Norval hamlet area and the Ontario Municipal Board approved development on that block of land. "It's wrong to say the pump was built to service (an additional) 36 units," said

Murphy. "The pump was built to accommodate development on the other side of the creek in terms of the depth of the wet well for the pump." He said it will allow the station to service the area on the other side of the creek without having to disturb the creek and would eliminate the need for having to build a second pumping station if there is development there.

He said placing the station in the valley was approved by the region's Ecological and Environmental Advisory Committee, CVC and OMB. "This process of locating the pumping station was not something that was done lightly," said Murphy.

- Why was Gastle, as Trails Committee Chair, never notified of a site plan proposal and why wasn't the trail system included on the plan? Murphy said the original design for the pumping station did not include a trail system but after discussions it was included. "The trail system can be accommodated in the valley above the flood line," said Murphy.

The location of the pumping station in the valley beside Hwy. 7 cuts off the future Hungry Hollow trails from the newly opened Willow Park Ecology Centre, said Gastle, and a tremendous opportunity to create an uninterrupted

trail system in Halton Hills has been lost.

"The site plan process was irresponsible and unacceptable," said Gastle, who resigned her membership in protest.

At Monday's meeting, council approved the minutes of the site plan meetings of Sept. 14 and 28—in effect approving the site plan committee's recommendations. As well council voted to remove a holding provision from the zoning bylaw, once Flume Developments Inc. conveys the valley/open space lands to the town, executes a site plan agreement for the pump station and executes a town subdivision agreement.

All members of council voted for reports' recommendations except for Gastle and Ward 2 Councillor Kevin Kuiack who had to declare a conflict of interest. Gastle immediately left the council chambers after the vote was taken. No members of the public were in the audience for the vote which was taken a few minutes after 11 p.m.

—By Cynthia Gamble and Lisa Tallyn, staff writers

**'The site plan process was irresponsible and unacceptable.'**

—Councillor  
Kathy Gastle



## Cases for a cure

As part of the annual Lions Club A Case For The Cure beer bottle drive in aid of the Canadian Diabetes Association, local Lions were out in full force recently at the local Beer Store, to accept donations of empties for the cause. Among those lending a hand were (from left) Lion Doug Welden, Lion president Jim Akers, Beer Store employee Zoe Warner and Lion Glenn McKenzie.

Photo by Ted Brown

## What You Said

*'Do you think the new drinking and driving penalties for repeat offenders will act as a deterrent?'*



**Linda Paul,**  
Georgetown,  
medical secretary  
"Yes, as long as they are getting some help. Over the years people have become more aware. It's the older generation that is the problem because in their day it wasn't a problem to drink and drive."



**Bill Poirier,**  
Georgetown, retired  
"I think that would teach them a lesson. The first, second and third (offence) punishment is enough. I would take the fourth (offence) right out."



**Ernest Nault,**  
Sudbury, retired  
"I think it's a little harsh. I've never done it myself but kids are kids. They think they're going to live forever."



**Chris Hedges,**  
Georgetown,  
video consultant  
"Yes, certainly. If you're going to drink and drive and you get busted you should get the full extent. You're not just playing with your own life, you're playing with everyone else's, too."



**Mia Sharron,**  
Limehouse,  
unemployed  
"I think it will. A lot of people depend on their driver's licence for work."

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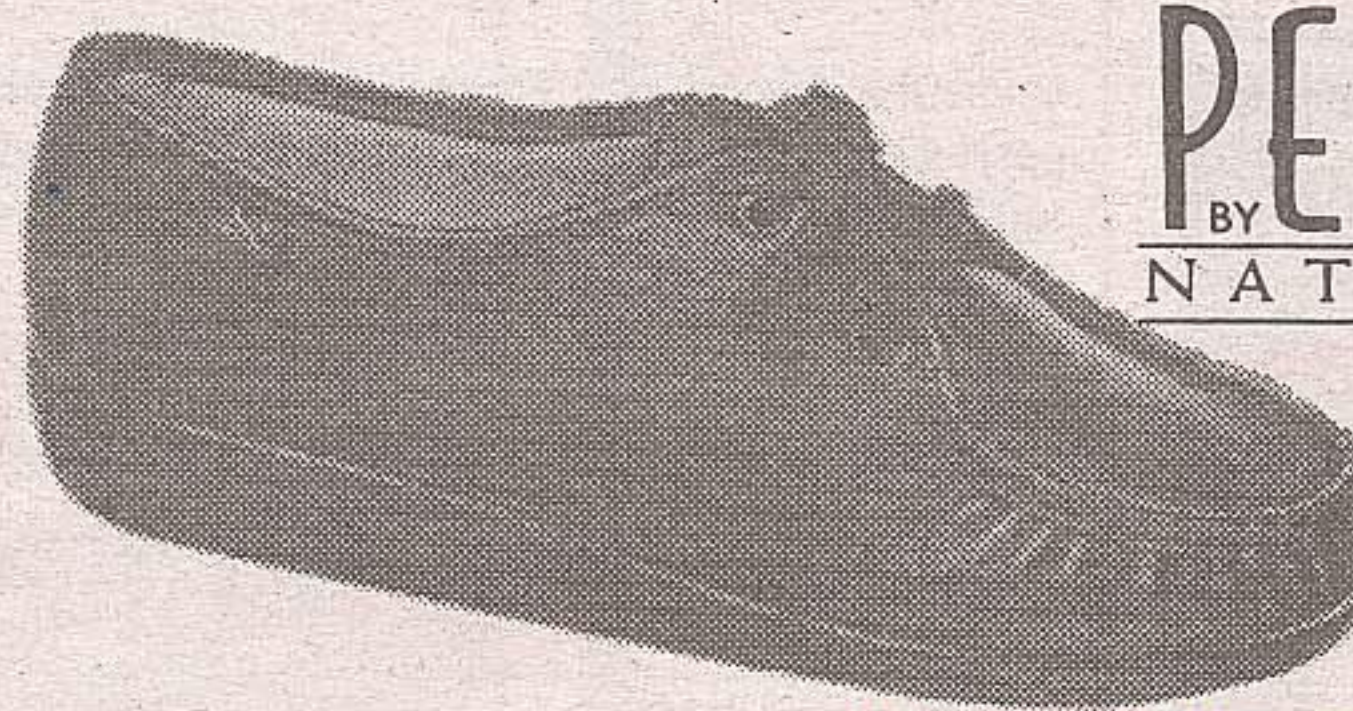
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